

Governor Jim Gibbons



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GOVERNOR GIBBONS ANNOUNCES THE APPOINTMENT OF HAROLD COOK

Carson City— Governor Jim Gibbons and Nevada Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Director Mike Willden today announced the appointment of Harold Cook, PhD, as the State Administrator of the Division of Mental Health and Developmental Services (MHDS).

“I am pleased to have a man of Dr. Cook’s experience and reputation fill this important position in state government. I have asked Dr. Cook to place a high degree of emphasis on determining methods that will help relieve the overcrowding that Clark County emergency rooms have continued to experience over the past several years,” Governor Gibbons said.

By Nevada Revised Statutes, the position of MHDS Administrator is appointed by the Governor, who receives recommendations from the Nevada Commission on Mental Health and Developmental Services. After receiving resumes from fourteen candidates, the Commission scheduled interviews with the top five candidates on January 17 and 18, 2008. The Commission forwarded its top three nominees to the Governor on January 21.

The MHDS Administrator is responsible for establishing policies and procedures to ensure adequate development and administration of services for mentally ill and developmentally disabled Nevadans, as well as oversight of the State’s Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Agency (SAPTA). MHDS has an annual budget of more than \$320 million and employs approximately 1,900 staff.

A disabled veteran from the Vietnam War, Dr. Cook, age 61, has served as MHDS Director of Northern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services since 1999. He has worked in the agency since 1978.

A 1973 graduate of the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR), with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology, Dr. Cook earned his Master of Arts in Psychology from Drake University (Des Moines, Iowa) in 1975, and a PhD in General Experimental Psychology from UNR in 1981. He is a member of the National Alliance of Mentally Ill (NAMI) and the Western Psychiatric State Hospital Association (WPSHA).

Of his appointment by Governor Gibbons, Dr. Cook said, ***“I am honored by the trust that has been placed in me by the Governor and Director Willden, and I will do my best to live up to the standards and expectations placed upon me by the appointment.”***

Dr. Angeline Miner, President of the Nevada Psychiatric Association, stated, ***“We congratulate Dr. Cook on his appointment and look forward to working with him in addressing the mental health needs in Nevada.”***